

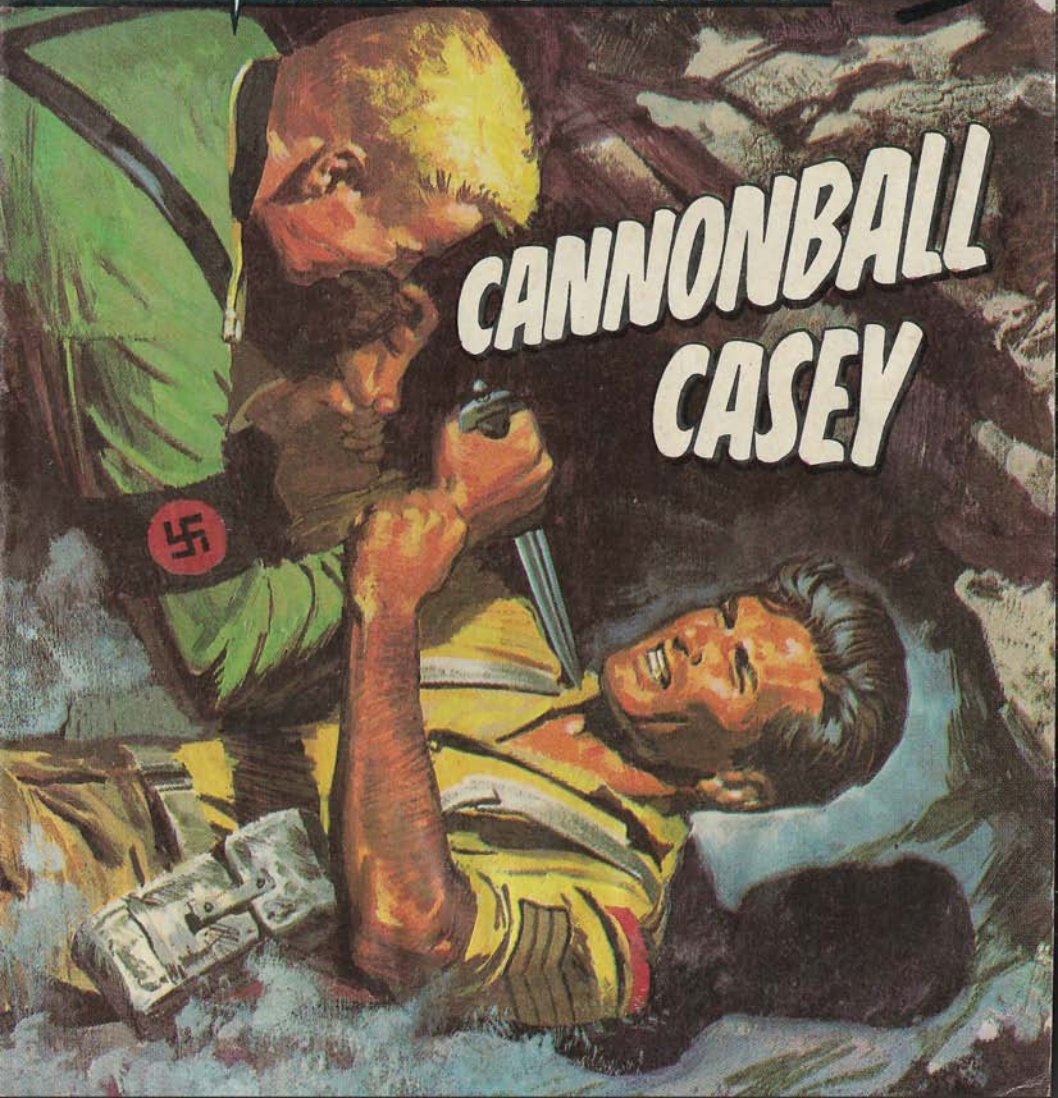
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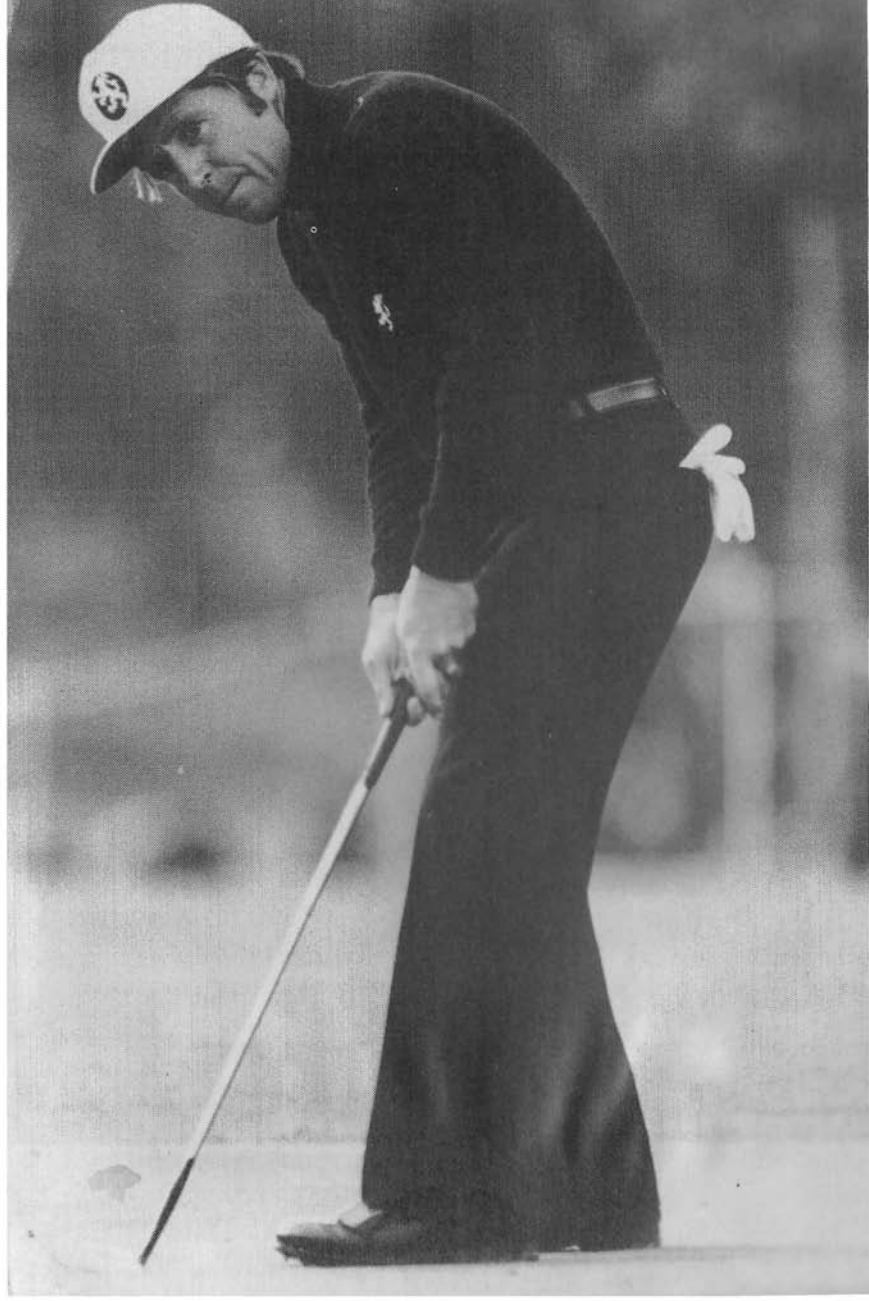
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# Commando

WAR STORIES IN PICTURES

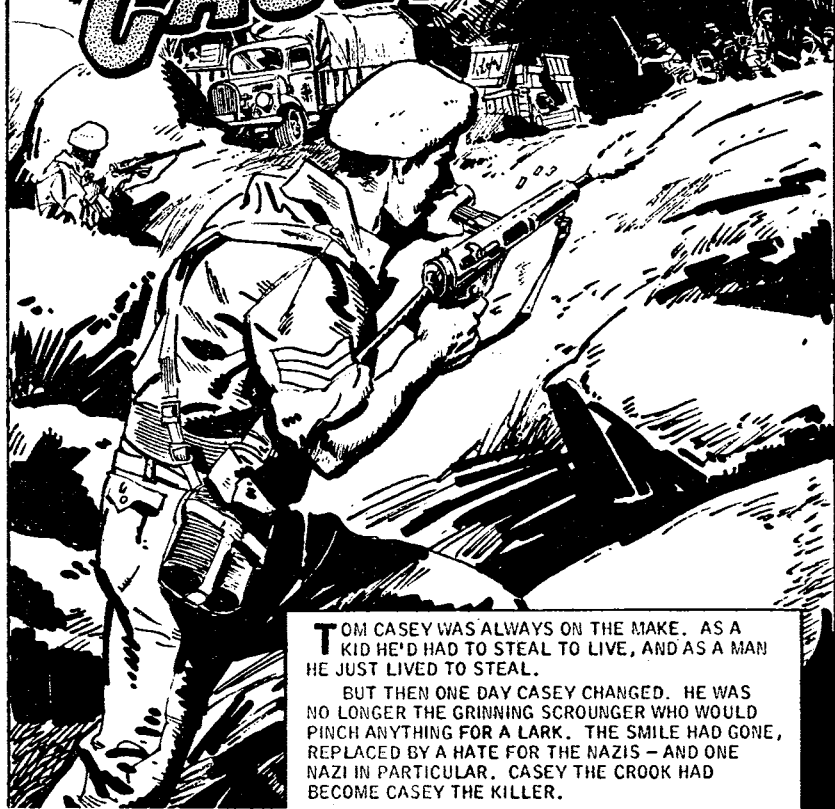
## CANNONBALL CASEY





**Stars of Golf — Gary Player**

# CANNONBALL CASEY



**T**OM CASEY WAS ALWAYS ON THE MAKE. AS A KID HE'D HAD TO STEAL TO LIVE, AND AS A MAN HE JUST LIVED TO STEAL.

BUT THEN ONE DAY CASEY CHANGED. HE WAS NO LONGER THE GRINNING SCROUNGER WHO WOULD PINCH ANYTHING FOR A LARK. THE SMILE HAD GONE, REPLACED BY A HATE FOR THE NAZIS — AND ONE NAZI IN PARTICULAR. CASEY THE CROOK HAD BECOME CASEY THE KILLER.

First published 1971

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN WAS A LONG, BITTER HAUL FOR THE ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE REDSHIRE REGIMENT. BUT NOW, RESTING IN A DUSTY OLIVE GROVE, THE MEN'S THOUGHTS WERE FAR FROM FIGHTING, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF PRIVATE BUSTER WILSON.

I'M STARVED. BUT I COULDN'T OPEN ANOTHER PACK OF THOSE ROTTEN RATIONS TO SAVE MY LIFE.

FANCY SOMETHING DIFFERENT? THEN LEAVE IT TO YOUR OLD MATE CASEY.

PRIVATE TOM CASEY'S SHARP EYES HAD SPOTTED A MOVEMENT IN A NEARBY FARM YARD.

TOM, KNOWN USUALLY AS "CANNONBALL" TO HIS MATES, WAS ALWAYS "ON THE MAKE". EVEN NOW, AS HE CRAWLED TOWARDS AN UNFORTUNATE STRAY CHICKEN, HIS MIND DWELT ON THE FINANCIAL REWARDS OF ITS CAPTURE.

THERE SHE IS. A BIT ON THE SKINNY SIDE, BUT THE LADS WILL PAY WELL FOR SOME CHICKEN.

HE STALKED HIS QUARRY WITH A STEALTH THAT HAD BEEN SECOND NATURE TO HIM EVER SINCE HIS CHILDHOOD IN LIVERPOOL'S DOCKLAND. IN THOSE DAYS IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO STEAL IN ORDER TO LIVE. UNFORTUNATELY IN CANNONBALL'S CASE THE HABIT HAD STUCK.

ON THE HILL ABOVE, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL BAYLIS, THE C.O. IN THAT SECTOR, HAD COME TO SEEK THE REASON FOR THE HOLD-UP IN THE ADVANCE.

CHARLIE COMPANY  
WERE ORDERED TO OCCUPY  
THAT FARM AN HOUR AGO.  
WHAT'S KEEPING THEM?

CAPTAIN HARLEY SAYS  
ONE OF THEIR PATROLS HAS  
SPOTTED A GERMAN SPANDAU  
CREW AMONG THE RUINS,  
SIR.



THE COLONEL'S LIPS TIGHTENED. THE WAITING GAME WAS NOT HIS IDEA OF BATTLE.

AT THE FARM BELOW, CASEY, UNAWARE THAT SOME OF HIS MATES HAD SPOTTED THE NAZIS, WAS SO INVOLVED IN THE CAPTURE OF HIS CHICKEN THAT HE FAILED TO NOTICE THE SPANDAU CREW UNTIL ALMOST TOO LATE.

WHERE DID HE  
COME FROM? GET  
HIM!

BLIMEY -  
SQUAREHEADS!



A STREAM OF LEAD SIZZLED JUST PAST HIM.

CASEY WAS ANYTHING BUT A HERO -  
AND HE KNEW IT. BUT NOW SELF-  
PRESERVATION TOOK OVER.



HE LEAPT INTO ACTION



THE GUN AND ITS CREW WERE BLASTED INTO OBLIVION.



THE WHOLE SCENE WAS WITNESSED BY THE LIEUTENANT - COLONEL.

CHARLIE COMPANY  
REPORTS OBSTACLE  
NOW CLEARED, SIR.

I SAW HOW IT WAS  
CLEARED, LIEUTENANT.  
BRILLIANT PIECE OF WORK  
- BY A PRIVATE SOLDIER,  
TOO.

BAYLIS SENT AN ORDER FOR CANNONBALL TO REPORT TO HIM.

IF BAYLIS WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE EPISODE, CASEY CERTAINLY WAS NOT. AND NEITHER WAS CAPTAIN HARLEY, CASEY'S C.O.

THE OPERATION WAS A  
FAILURE AS FAR AS I'M  
CONCERNED. THERE'S  
NOTHING LEFT OF THAT  
CHICKEN BUT A LOAD  
OF FEATHERS.

I'VE NOT SEEN SUCH COLD-  
BLOODED COURAGE IN A LONG  
TIME, CASEY. THAT WAS A  
BRILLIANT OPERATION.

AFTER CASEY LEFT THEM -



AND AS BAYLIS LEFT -





FORTY-EIGHT HOURS LATER CHARLIE COMPANY WERE RELIEVED FOR A FEW DAYS' REST BEHIND THE LINE IN THE TOWN OF PONTIAVO. ALL THE MEN WERE IN A JOVIAL MOOD, NONE MORE SO THAN CASEY AND BUSTER.

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS BREAK.

TOO TRUE!  
IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK IN TOWN AGAIN.

PONTIAVO WAS A SMALL BUT BUSY TOWN THAT HAD NOT LONG BEEN LIBERATED.

AMONG THE GERMAN PRISONERS TAKEN IN THE BATTLE FOR THE TOWN WAS THE NOTORIOUS GENERAL VON KURL. HE WAS BEING HELD IN THE LOCAL POLICE CELLS. STRICT SECURITY PRECAUTIONS WERE BEING TAKEN, AS CASEY FOUND OUT AS HE STROLLED PAST.

A COP SHOP! I CAN TELL ONE A MILE OFF, EVEN THOUGH THE NAME IS DIFFERENT.

KEEP MOVING, SOLDIER.

AS HE WALKED ON THROUGH THE MILLING CROWDS, CASEY'S THOUGHTS, WHICH WERE ALWAYS ON WAYS OF MAKING MONEY, WERE INTERRUPTED BY A SHOUT FROM A NEARBY SOLDIER.



AS THE OTHER BOY MADE HIS MOVE -



BEFORE THEY KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING, THE THREE LADS WERE HERDED AGAINST THE WALL.



THEN CASEY SAW THE SOLDIER WHO HAD BEEN ROBBED APPROACHING.

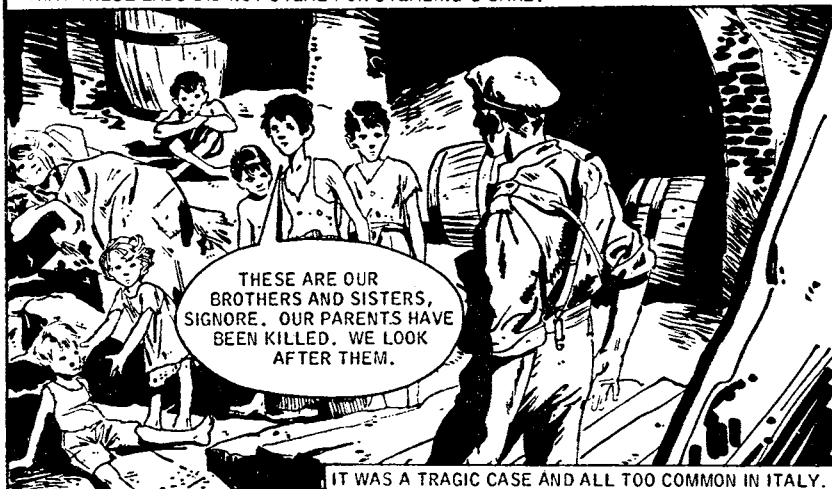
HE PUSHED THE YOUNGSTERS ROUND THE CORNER BEHIND HIM AFTER HE'D TAKEN THE STOLEN WALLET.



CASEY THEN FOLLOWED THE LADS TO THEIR HIDE-OUT, A CELLAR IN A WRECKED AND DESERTED NARROW STREET.



AS HE DESCENDED THE STAIRS, CASEY SURVEYED THE SCENE SILENTLY. HE SAW NOW THAT THESE LADS DID NOT STEAL FOR STEALING'S SAKE.



THESE ARE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, SIGNORE. OUR PARENTS HAVE BEEN KILLED. WE LOOK AFTER THEM.

IT WAS A TRAGIC CASE AND ALL TOO COMMON IN ITALY.

LOOKING AT THEIR HUNGRY FACES REMINDED CASEY OF HIS OWN CHILDHOOD. HE EMPTIED HIS POCKETS.



GET STUCK INTO THIS LOT.

I TAKE SOME TO GIORGIO.

GIORGIO GRINNED WEAKLY AS HE ATE THE CHOCOLATE.



GIORGIO HAS BEEN SICK MANY DAYS. YOU KNOW WHY?

A GOOD FEED IS ALL HE NEEDS. JUST HANG ON...

IT DIDN'T TAKE HIM LONG TO FIND WHAT HE WANTED. IN A SIDE-STREET NEAR THE PIAZZA HE STRUCK A BARGAIN WITH AN AMERICAN SUPPLY-TRUCK DRIVER.



THE YOUNGSTERS HAD NEVER SEEN SUCH FOOD IN THEIR LIVES. PHILO GRINNED HIS THANKS AS CANNONBALL DISHED OUT THE RATIONS.



AN HOUR LATER THEY EXPERIENCED SOMETHING THEY HAD NOT KNOWN FOR MONTHS - FULL STOMACHS.

BEFORE LEAVING, CASEY PROMISED TO COME BACK  
AND SEE THEY RECEIVED REGULAR SUPPLIES OF FOOD.

AND NO MORE  
THIEVING. I KNOW WHAT  
TROUBLE THAT CAN  
GET YOU INTO.



A FEW DAYS LATER CASEY WAS ORDERED TO A FULL DRESS PARADE IN THE TOWN.

THE FOLLOWING MEN  
WILL RECEIVE DECORATIONS  
THEY HAVE WON IN THE  
FIELD OF BATTLE.

PRIVATE CASEY!



SO CANNONBALL GOT HIS MILITARY MEDAL.

"...PRIVATE CASEY, REGARDLESS OF HIS OWN SAFETY, WENT FORWARD SINGLE-HANDED AND DESTROYED THE MACHINE-GUN POST."

MAGNIFICENT SHOW, CASEY. MEN LIKE YOU ARE THE BACK-BONE OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

BLIMEY! I CAN'T SEE CAPTAIN HARLEY AGREEING WITH THAT.

WHEN THE PARADE WAS DISMISSED -

SIGNORE, YOU ARE A BRAVE MAN. YOU WIN MEDAL.

DON'T BE DAFT, PHILO. THEY JUST ISSUE THEM WITH THE RATIONS.

CASEY HAD NEVER FELT EMBARRASSED IN HIS LIFE, BUT HE DID NOW.

HERE, YOU DESERVE THIS MORE THAN I DO. IT TAKES REAL GUTS TO SURVIVE THE WAY YOU KIDS ARE DOING.

BUT I CAN'T KEEP YOUR MEDAL!



BUT CASEY WAS GLAD TO GET RID OF THE MEDAL.



CANNONBALL PROMISED TO DROP MORE FOOD IN BEFORE HE REJOINED HIS UNIT THAT EVENING.

ONCE AGAIN HE FOUND HIS SOURCE EASILY.



BUT HE'D JUST TURNED INTO THE NEXT STREET WHEN TWO ALERT AMERICAN M.P.'s SPOTTED HIM WITH THE CARTONS.



CANNONBALL COULD HAVE EVADED THE M.P.'s, BUT HE HAD TO DELIVER HIS RATIONS.



THE STREET WAS A DEAD-END. CASEY WAS CORNERED.



AFTER A NIGHT IN THE NEAREST GUARD ROOM, CASEY WAS TAKEN BACK TO HIS UNIT.



SILENCING CASEY WITH A SAVAGE LOOK, HARLEY DISMISSED THE AMERICANS.

THANK YOU, SERGEANT. I SHALL DEAL WITH THIS MAN MYSELF.

YES, SIR.

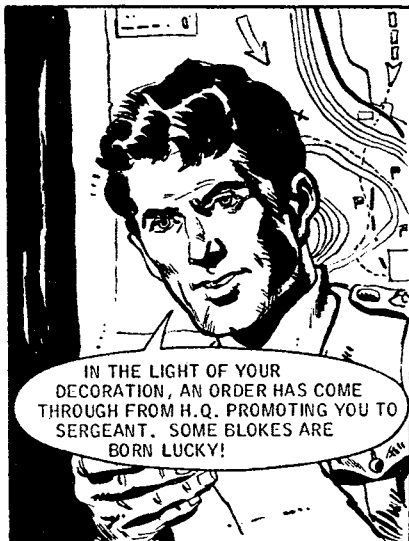
THE M.P.s HAD HANDED IN THEIR REPORT AND THEY ASSUMED CAPTAIN HARLEY WOULD SET THE MACHINERY IN MOTION FOR A COURT-MARTIAL.

BUT THE CHARGE WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PROVE WITHOUT THE EVIDENCE OF THE RATIONS THEMSELVES.

YOU'RE WILY ENOUGH TO KNOW WE CAN'T MAKE THIS CASE STICK. ANYWAY WE CAN'T VERY WELL PUT A MAN IN THE GLASS-HOUSE THE DAY AFTER HE'S RECEIVED THE MILITARY MEDAL.

THAT'S NICE TO KNOW, SIR.

BUT CAPTAIN HARLEY HAD SOMETHING ELSE TO SAY.



SO PRIVATE CASEY WAS NOW SERGEANT CASEY. THAT NIGHT, AS HE SEWED ON HIS STRIPES, HE STILL FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE.



THE FOLLOWING DAY...



I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE CASEY WEARING SERGEANT'S STRIPES, SIR.

STRANGER THINGS HAVE HAPPENED. YOU NEVER KNOW - THEY MIGHT SUIT HIM.

CASEY TRIED ACTING LIKE N.C.O.s HE KNEW, BUT HE HAD NO AMBITION TO ORDER OTHERS ABOUT. HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES ALSO MEANT HE COULDN'T SLIP INTO TOWN WHEN HE WANTED, SO HE WASN'T IN PONTIACO TWO DAYS LATER WHEN TWO JEEP LOADS OF SOLDIERS PULLED UP OUTSIDE THE POLICE STATION WHERE GERMAN GENERAL VON KURL WAS BEING HELD.



THE SPEED WITH WHICH THE "MAJOR" DREW HIS REVOLVER LEFT THE GUARDS NO TIME FOR SURPRISE. THEY WERE MERCILESSLY GUNNED DOWN ON THE SPOT.



THESE MEN WERE GERMANS, LED BY THE INFAMOUS COLONEL "SCARFACE" HOVEN. THEIR MISSION - TO RESCUE VON KURL.

THEY HEADED FOR THE CELL WHERE THE GENERAL WAS BEING HELD.



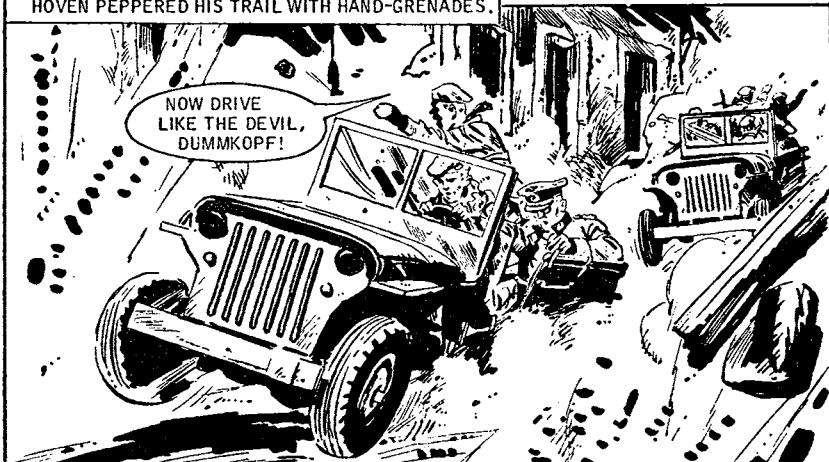
THE SURPRISE WAS COMPLETE. BEFORE THE ALARM COULD BE RAISED, VON KURL WAS SWEEPED FROM HIS CELL AND OUT TO THE JEEPS.



THEN THEY MADE THEIR FIRST MISTAKE...



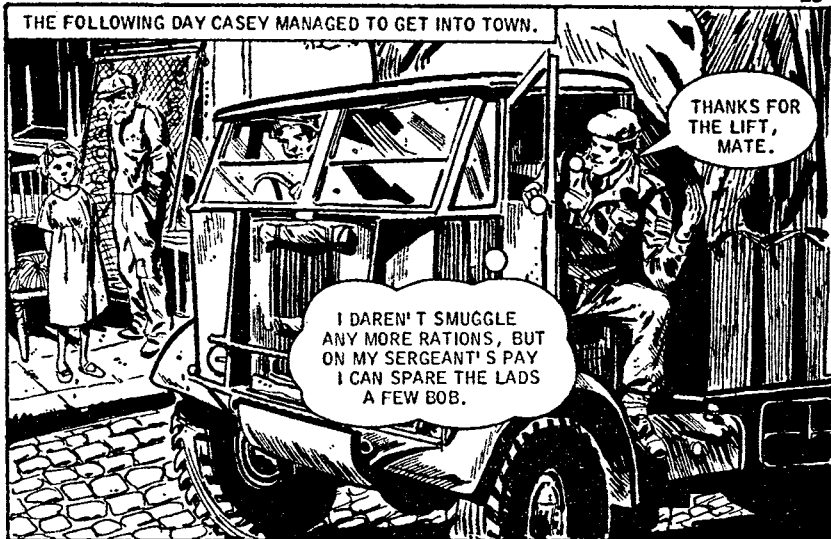
HOVEN PEPPERED HIS TRAIL WITH HAND-GRENADES.



THE SHEER AUDACITY OF THE RAID WAS ITS GUARANTEE OF SUCCESS. BY THE TIME THE ALLIES HAD GRASPED WHAT WAS HAPPENING, HOVEN AND HIS MEN WERE WELL ON THE WAY TO THEIR OWN LINES WITH VON KURL.



THE FOLLOWING DAY CASEY MANAGED TO GET INTO TOWN.



BUT WHEN HE CAME TO THE CELLAR...

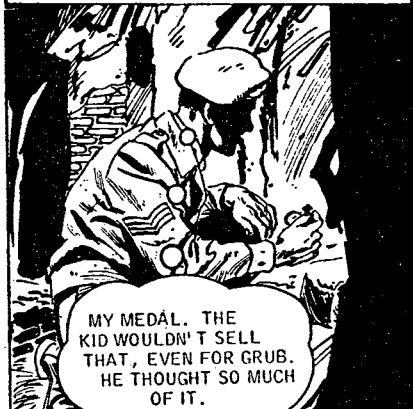


DAZED, CASEY TURNED TO AN OLD MAN WHO HAD BEEN WATCHING HIS EVERY MOVE.



HE COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. THIS MUST BE THE WRONG CELLAR. HIS MIND IN A TURMOIL, CANNONBALL STARTED TO SEARCH THE WRECKAGE.

THEN HE FOUND THE ONLY PROOF HE NEEDED.

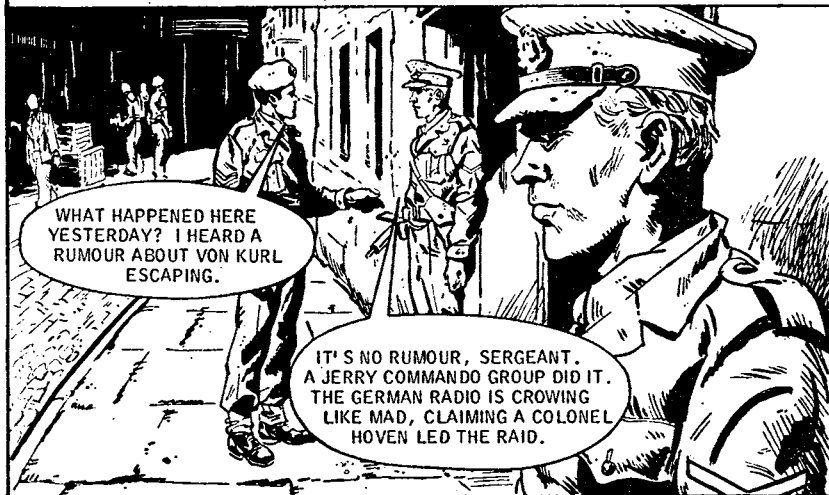


IT TOOK A FEW MINUTES FOR HIS MIND TO ABSORB THE FULL IMPACT OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

HE GAZED AT THE MEDAL AS IF THROUGH A MIST, AND ANGER SWELLED UP INSIDE HIM.



CASEY EMERGED FROM THAT CELLAR A CHANGED MAN. AN OBSESSION FOR REVENGE BEGAN TO BUILD UP IN HIS MIND.



NEXT DAY THE REGIMENT RECEIVED ORDERS TO MOVE UP TO THE FRONT LINE.



CASEY WAS POSSESSED BY IMPATIENCE TO GET TO THE FRONT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

BUT TO HIS DISGUST THEY WERE PLACED IN A RESERVE POSITION. HE SEARCHED OUT CAPTAIN HARLEY.



BITTERLY CANNONBALL TURNED AWAY -



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE AFTER, CASEY. YOU THINK COMMANDOS ARE IN A BETTER POSITION TO COLLECT LOOT AND YOU'RE SCARED OF MISSING OUT.

NO ONE RECOGNISED THE CHANGE THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE IN CASEY'S OUTLOOK. CERTAINLY NO ONE BELIEVED THAT HE WAS THIRSTING FOR BATTLE.

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT THEY WERE PREPARING TO SEND OUT A RECONNAISSANCE PATROL. LIEUTENANT TIM GREGSON, A CAPABLE YOUNG OFFICER, WAS IN CHARGE OF IT.



YOU'VE GOT SIX MEN, TIM, AND THEY'RE ALL GOOD. YOU'VE GOT TO WEIGH UP JERRY'S DEFENSIVE STRENGTH AROUND THAT BRIDGE.

ONE SNAG, SIR. SERGEANT ROSS HAS REPORTED SICK. I NEED A SUBSTITUTE N.C.O.

CASEY'S SHARP EARS OVERHEARD THE CONVERSATION AS HE WALKED PAST.



CAPTAIN HARLEY COULD THINK OF NO GOOD REASON FOR REFUSING SO CASEY JOINED THE PATROL WHICH ALSO INCLUDED BUSTER, HIS MATE.

LIEUTENANT GREGSON KNEW HIS NIGHT NAVIGATION AND TOOK THEM UNERRINGLY TO THEIR OBJECTIVE - A STONE BRIDGE WHICH SPANNED A WIDE RIVER.



A SEARCHLIGHT PIERCED THE DARKNESS, AND A BURST OF MACHINE-GUN FIRE CAUGHT GREGSON FULL IN THE CHEST.

DROP FLAT!

REALISING THAT GREGSON WAS DEAD, CASEY TOOK COMMAND.

WE'LL HAVE  
THE LIGHT OUT  
FOR A START...

HE KNEW THEY HADN'T A HOPE BY STAYING WHERE THEY WERE.



CANNONBALL COVERED THE PATROL UNTIL THEY WERE ALL IN THE RIVER.





ONCE THE PATROL REACHED THE OTHER BANK, HE TOOK THE PLUNGE.



AS SOON AS HE REACHED THE OTHER SIDE, THEY DASHED FOR A FOREST.



BUT WHEN DAYLIGHT CAME THEY WERE STILL GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION. THE MEN WERE EDGY NOW AND THEY NOTED WITH ALARM THE ANGRY, DETERMINED GLINT IN CASEY'S EYE. THEY KNEW THAT WHATEVER HE WAS UP TO, IT SPelt DANGER FOR EVERY MAN-JACK OF THEM.



THE COLD EDGE TO CASEY'S VOICE STOPPED FURTHER ARGUMENT. THE PATROL MARCHED FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, TAKING COVER WHENEVER THEY SAW ENEMY TROOPS.

AS DUSK FELL ONCE MORE, CASEY LED THEM CLOSE TO A GERMAN SIGNALS UNIT.



I WANT ONE OF THOSE JERRIES, AND I WANT HIM ALIVE. AS SOON AS YOU HEAR ONE COMING, GRAB HIM!

WHAT'S THE POINT OF TAKING A PRISONER? WE'D NEVER GET HIM BACK TO OUR OWN LINES.

CASEY IGNORED THE REMARK. HE HAD HEARD SOMEONE COMING.


IT WAS AN OFF-DUTY MEMBER OF THE SIGNALS UNIT TAKING A STROLL. STEALTHILY CASEY AND ANOTHER SOLDIER GRABBED HIM.



I'VE GOT HIM, SARGE.

GET HIM OVER TO THOSE TREES.


THE DAZED GERMAN COULD NOT COLLECT HIS WITS.



YOU LISTEN IN TO  
THE RADIO TRAFFIC? YOU  
KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON  
AROUND HERE?

HE DOESN'T  
SPEAK ENGLISH, SARGE.  
LET ME HAVE A GO.

BUSTER WILSON KNEW JUST ENOUGH GERMAN TO BE UNDERSTOOD.



ASK HIM WHAT UNIT  
COLONEL HOVEN IS WITH,  
AND WHERE HE IS NOW. HE'LL  
REGRET IT IF HE DOESN'T  
ANSWER.

HE'S A WIRELESS  
OP ALL RIGHT. HE HANDLES  
A LOT OF THE SIGNALS.

THERE WAS RECOGNITION IN THE GERMAN'S FACE WHEN HE HEARD THE NAME HOVEN.

ENCOURAGED BY CASEY'S GUN, HE RECALLED SEVERAL MESSAGES...

HE SAYS HOVEN  
IS WITH A SPECIAL  
COMMANDO UNIT BASED  
IN THE PELAVI  
MOUNTAINS.

THAT'S  
ENOUGH FOR  
ME.

THE GERMAN LOOKED RELIEVED TO BE BOUND INSTEAD OF SHOT.

BUT NOW THE MEN OF THE PATROL WERE NEAR MUTINY.

I'VE HEARD OF HOVEN.  
HE'S ONE OF THE NAZIS WHO  
COLLECT ART TREASURES AND  
OTHER LOOT FROM THE OCCUPIED  
COUNTRIES. WHY ARE WE  
GOING AFTER HIM?

BECAUSE I  
SAY WE ARE, AND  
I HAVE MY REASONS.

THE OTHERS, ENCOURAGED BY BUSTER'S STAND, ALSO DECIDED TO DIG THEIR HEELS IN.



OK, HEAD BACK FOR OUR LINES, AND SEE HOW FAR YOU GET. ONCE THAT RADIO MAN RAISES THE ALARM, THERE'LL BE THOUSANDS OF JERRIES HUNTING US.

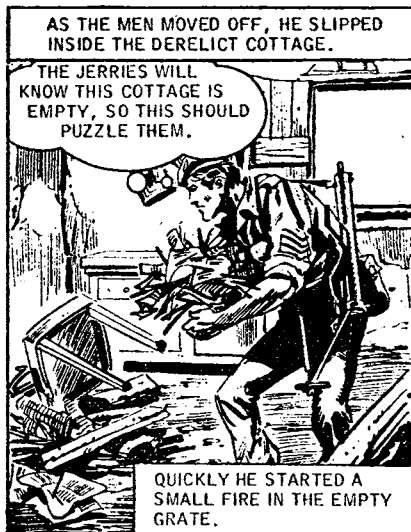
WE'RE NOT GOING ANY FURTHER WITH YOU. WE KNOW YOU'RE ONLY AFTER THE LOOT THAT HOVEN HAS COLLECTED.

BUSTER POINTED OUT THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN ANYWAY, WHICHEVER WAY THEY WENT.




WITH ME YOU STAND A CHANCE. I'VE SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE DODGING THE LAW OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER. I'M A PROFESSIONAL - AND I CAN GET PAST THE JERRIES. NOW BELT UP AND FOLLOW ME.

THAT STEELY GLINT OF RUTHLESSNESS IN CASEY'S EYES SILENCED ANY FURTHER PROTESTS.




AND AS THE GERMANS  
MOVED UPHILL TOWARDS  
THE COTTAGE, CASEY  
WAS PREPARING FOR  
THEIR ARRIVAL.



THAT OUGHT TO DO IT.  
AS SOON AS THE STRING BURNS  
THROUGH THERE'LL BE ONE ALMIGHTY  
BANG. THEN GOODBYE, FRITZ -  
I HOPE!

HE HAD REMOVED THE RETAINING PINS FROM THE GRENADES AND TIED PIECES OF STRING  
AROUND THE SAFETY LEVERS TO HOLD THEM IN PLACE. THEN HE PLACED THE GRENADES  
CAREFULLY IN THE FIREPLACE.

THE NAZI WERE ALMOST AT  
THE COTTAGE WHEN CASEY  
STARTED RUNNING UPHILL,  
USING THE ROCKS AS COVER.



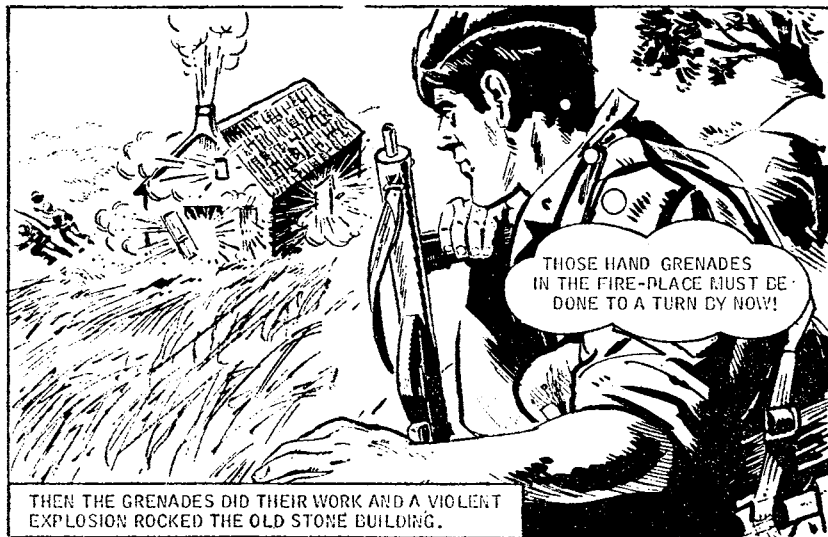
TIME TO GO. THINGS  
SHOULD BE HOTTING UP  
DOWN THERE ANY  
MINUTE.

WITHIN A FEW MINUTES THE COTTAGE WAS SURROUNDED.



BUT, AS MULLER FOUND OUT, THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE COTTAGE, ONLY A FIRE...

THIS IS A RECENT FIRE. THEY MUST BE NEAR HERE.



THEN THE GRENADES DID THEIR WORK AND A VIOLENT EXPLOSION ROCKED THE OLD STONE BUILDING.



CASEY FORCED HIS MEN TO MARCH DAY AND NIGHT, WITH ONLY BRIEF PAUSES FOR REST, UNTIL THEY REACHED THE FOOTHILLS OF THE PELAVI MOUNTAINS.



CASEY'S FOX-LIKE HEARING HAD PICKED UP THE SOUND OF A MOTOR APPROACHING.

IT WAS A GERMAN MOTOR-CYCLE COMBINATION - PURSUING A MAN IN BRITISH BATTLEDRESS.



CASEY WAITED UNTIL  
THE MOTOR-CYCLE  
WAS LEVEL WITH HIM...

WHY DON'T YOU  
TWO STOP AND ADMIRE  
THE VIEW?

AAGH!

THE DRIVER HIT, THE BIKE SLEWED TOWARDS THE PRECIPICE EDGE AND TUMBLED TO  
THE WAITING ROCKS, FIVE HUNDRED FEET BELOW.

THE TATTERED BRITISH SOLDIER WAS AMAZED.

WHERE DID  
YOU BLOKES DROP  
FROM?


NEVER MIND  
THAT. WHO ARE  
YOU?

BOMBARDIER TIM MURPHY SPLUTTERED OUT HIS STORY, STILL HARDLY ABLE TO BELIEVE  
HIS GOOD FORTUNE.

MURPHY WAS ONE OF A SMALL GROUP OF BRITISH PRISONERS WHO HAD BEEN TAKEN DEEP INTO THE MOUNTAINS UNDER STRICT GUARD TO STORE VAST AMOUNTS OF ART TREASURES IN A SECLUDED CAVE. ONLY BY SHEER LUCK HAD HE MANAGED TO ESCAPE.



MURPHY WASN'T KEEN AT ALL.

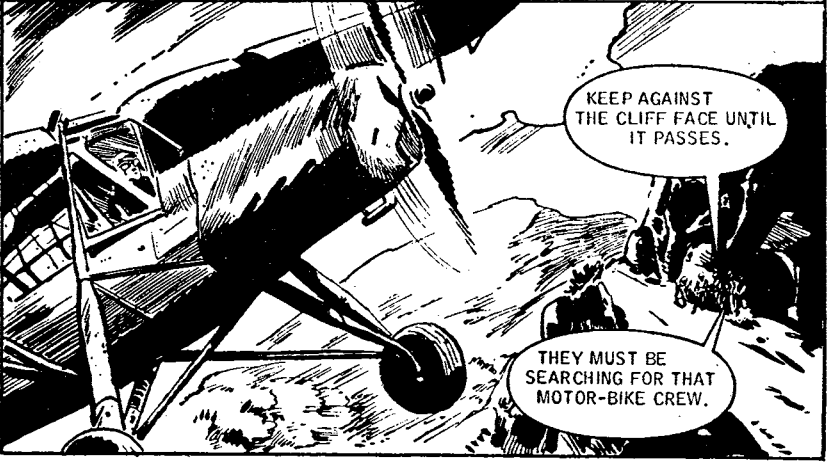


I DON'T KNOW HOW TO REACH IT. I WALKED FOR HOURS BEFORE THEY CAUGHT ME UP, AND LOST ALL SENSE OF DIRECTION.

YOU MUST HAVE A ROUGH IDEA. SOMEHOW WE'RE GOING TO REACH THAT PLACE.

CASEY'S MIND WAS SET AND THERE WOULD BE NO ARGUMENT.

THEY SLOGGED ON THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS, CASEY DRIVING THEM MERCILESSLY. IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON WHEN THE DRONE OF A GERMAN STORCH LIGHT AIRCRAFT REACHED THEM AS THEY SCALED A STEEP CLIFF.



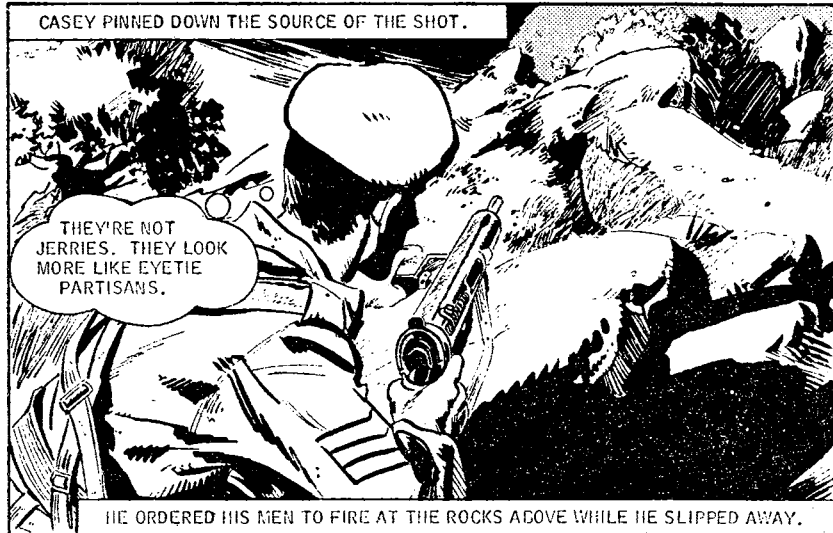
KEEP AGAINST THE CLIFF FACE UNTIL IT PASSES.

THEY MUST BE SEARCHING FOR THAT MOTOR-BIKE CREW.

THE SPOTTER AIRCRAFT DIDN'T SEE THEM. BUT A FEW HOURS LATER...



CASEY PINNED DOWN THE SOURCE OF THE SHOT.



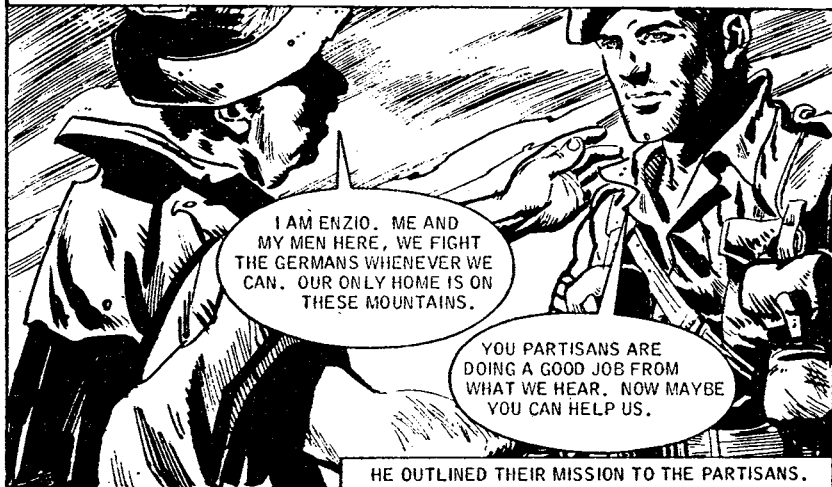
LIKE A LIZARD HE SLID ROUND THE ROCKS TO A POINT JUST BEHIND THE ATTACKERS.



CASEY WOULD NEVER HAVE GOT ALL THE PARTISANS BUT LUCKILY THEIR LEADER CHOSE NOT TO FIGHT.



IF CASEY HAD ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THE ITALIANS THEY WERE DISPELLED WHEN HE SAW THE BENIGN EXPRESSION OF THEIR LEADER.



MURPHY DESCRIBED THE VALLEY WHERE THE TREASURES WERE BEING STORED.



THE PARTISANS, WHO COULD CLIMB LIKE MOUNTAIN GOATS, LED CASEY AND HIS MEN UNERRINGLY THROUGH THE NIGHT TO THE VALLEY. IT WAS EARLY MORNING WHEN THEY FINALLY REACHED IT.



THE BRITISH PRISONERS BELOW IN THE VALLEY WERE BEING WORKED LIKE ANIMALS.



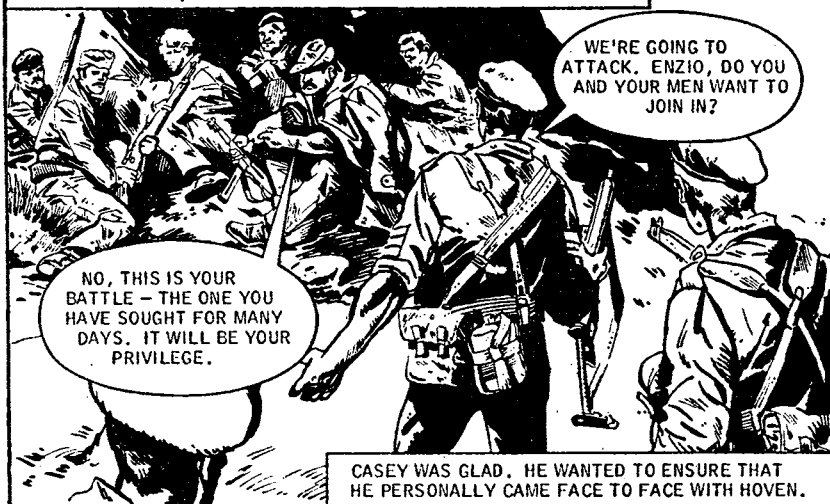


FROM THE ROCKS ABOVE, CASEY SAW A GERMAN SCOUT CAR DRAW UP. HE THOUGHT IT WAS HOVEN AND MURPHY CONFIRMED HIS GUESS.



THE SERGEANT ACCEPTED THE COLD AUTHORITY OF HOVEN'S ORDER WITHOUT QUESTION.

BUT HIGH ABOVE, A SURPRISE WAS BEING PREPARED FOR HOVEN.



CASEY LED HIS MEN SILENTLY DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE.



BUT SOMEONE HAD DISLODGED A STONE. AS IT CLATTERED DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE, THE GERMANS SWUNG ROUND, RIFLES AT THE READY.



CASEY AND HIS MEN TOOK COVER IMMEDIATELY, AS DOWN BELOW HOVEN GATHERED THE PRISONERS TOGETHER AT THE POINT OF HIS LUGER.



HE LOST NO TIME IN RALLYING THE GROUP TO A DO-OR-DIE ATTACK ON THE NAZIS.

COME ON, LADS! WE CAN TAKE 'EM EASY!

WE'RE WITH YOU, SARGE!

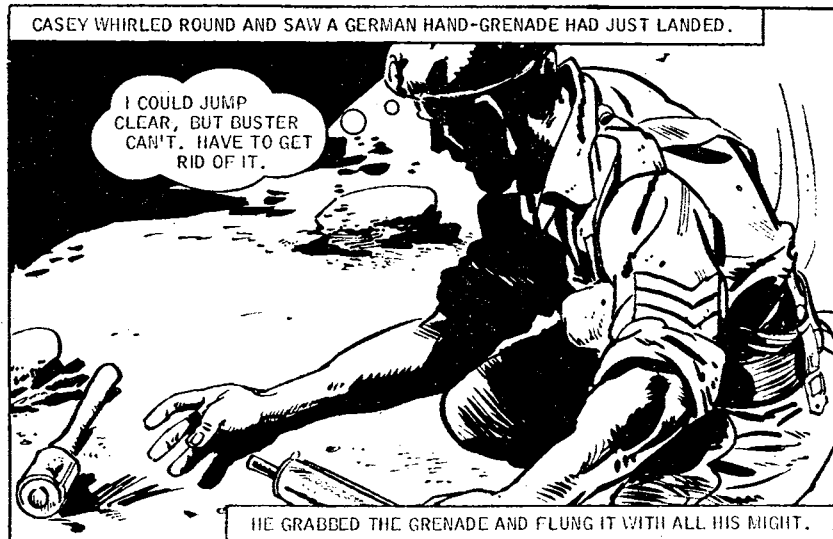
BUSTER GAZED IN AMAZEMENT AT THE MAN WHO HAD ONCE BEEN NOTORIOUS AS THE BATTALION'S NUMBER ONE LAYABOUT. THIS WAS CERTAINLY A NEW CASEY!

THE BRITISH TROOPS TORE ON WITH RUTHLESS DISREGARD FOR THEIR SAFETY.

YOU CERTAINLY GET A KICK OUT OF YOUR JOB, HANS!

BUSTER'S RIGHT ARM WAS HIT. HE FELL HELPLESS...

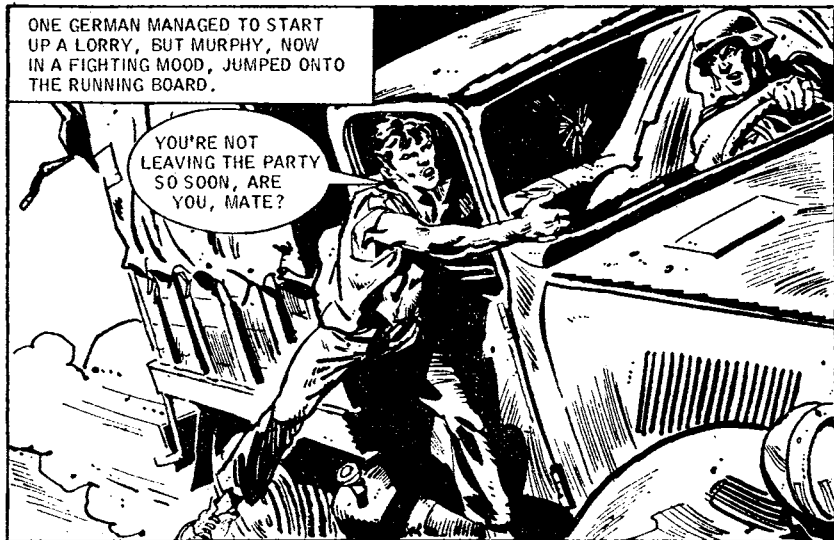
CAN'T GET UP...



IT EXPLODED ON THE INSTANT OF LANDING IN THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE.



ONE GERMAN MANAGED TO START UP A LORRY, BUT MURPHY, NOW IN A FIGHTING MOOD, JUMPED ONTO THE RUNNING BOARD.



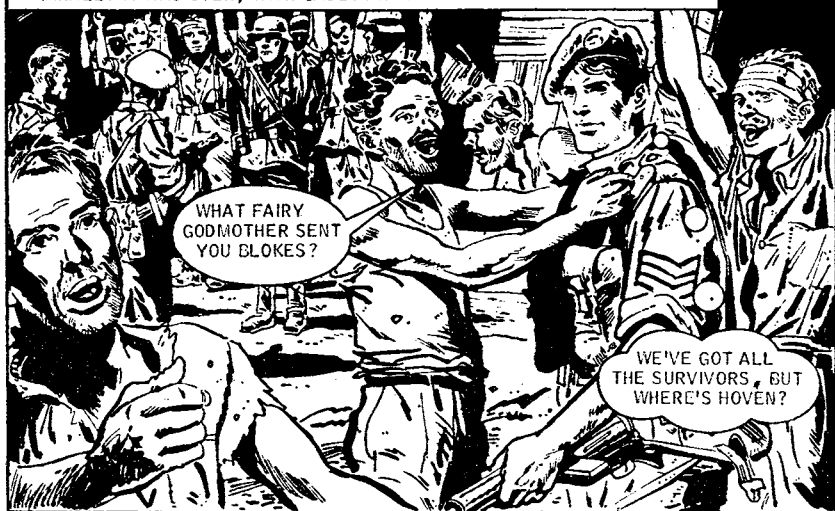
MURPHY GAVE A TUG AT THE STEERING WHEEL AND LEAPT CLEAR AS THE TRUCK CRASHED IN FLAMES.



THE GERMAN DEFENDERS FOUGHT BACK BITTERLY BUT GRADUALLY THEIR NUMBERS WERE WHITTLED DOWN BY THE SHEER TENACITY OF CASEY'S LITTLE GROUP.



FINALLY IT WAS OVER, WITH CASEY AND HIS SMALL BUNCH VICTORIOUS.



A QUICK CHECK PROVED CASEY'S WORST FEAR.



WITH A SICK FEELING IN HIS STOMACH, CASEY REALISED THAT HE HAD FAILED. HOVEN HAD ESCAPED, AND THE YOUNGSTERS OF PONTIAVO WERE STILL UNAVENGED.

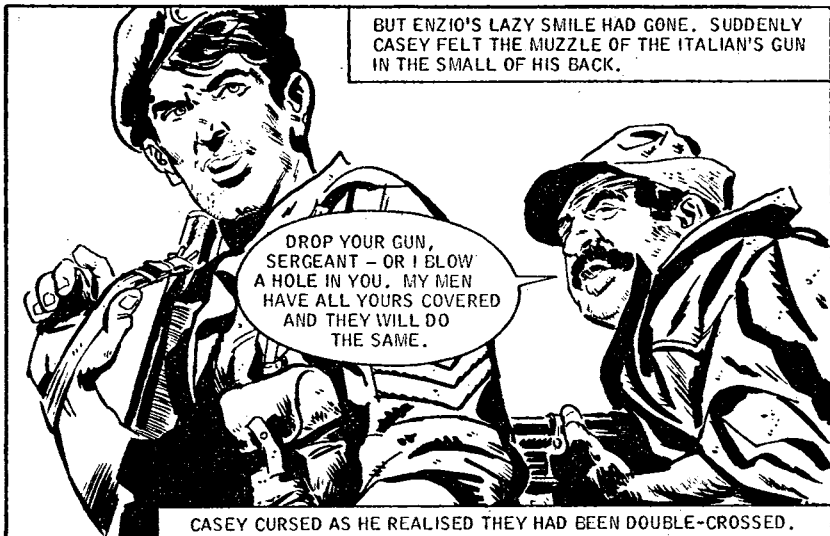


THEN ENZIO AND HIS MEN CAME DOWN FROM THE ROCKS.

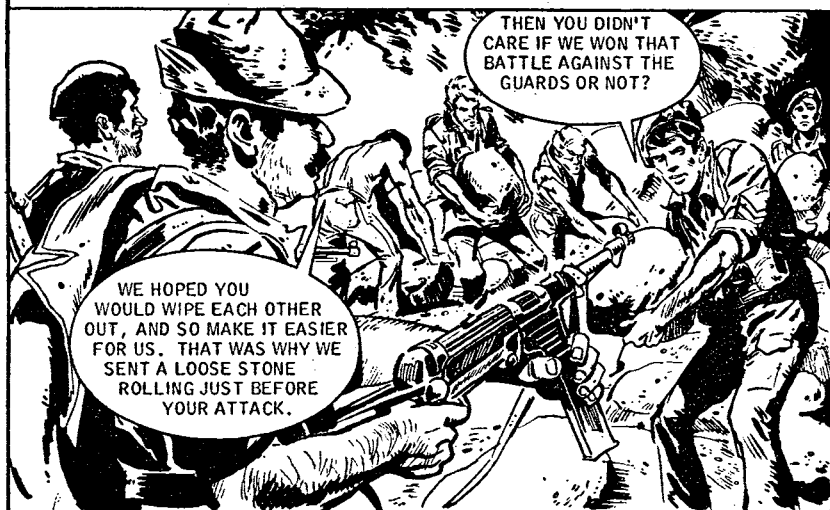


ENZIO'S GREATEST INTEREST SEEMED TO BE FOR THE CAVE.





THE BRITISH WERE SET TO WORK MOVING THE LOOSE STONES FROM THE CAVE ENTRANCE.



EVEN THE WOUNDED BUSTER WAS MADE TO WORK.



AFTER THEY HAD WORKED FOR AN HOUR, CASEY BEGAN TO HEAR SCRATCHING SOUNDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL OF ROCKS.

THAT NOISE I HEARD - IT CAME FROM INSIDE THE CAVE. I WONDER...



IN A LOW WHISPER, CASEY TOLD BUSTER TO PASS WORD ON TO THE REST OF THE MEN. WHEN HE GAVE THE WORD, THEY WERE TO JUMP CLEAR.

WHEN IT CAME TO MOVING THE FINAL BOULDER, CASEY INSISTED ON DOING IT ALONE.



OK, LADS - GET CLEAR!

AS CASEY'S MEN MOVED AWAY FROM THE CAVE THE ITALIANS SURGED FORWARD, THEIR GREED-FILLED EYES FIXED ON THE ONE STONE THAT STOOD BETWEEN THEM AND A FORTUNE.

NOW THE PARTISANS WERE BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE CAVE, JUST AS CASEY HAD PLANNED. WHEN THE STONE FINALLY GAVE WAY...



THE GERMAN'S BULLETS BLASTED RIGHT INTO THE UN-  
PREPARED ITALIANS, AND ENZIO WAS FIRST TO FALL.

THE BRITISH TROOPS TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION.



THE DEWILDERED HOVEN STOPPED FIRING AS HE SAW THE CONFUSION IN FRONT OF HIM.

WHILE THE OTHERS DEALT WITH THE PARTISANS, CASEY CLOSED WITH HOVEN.



HOVEN FOUGHT BACK WITH THE FEROCITY OF A CORNERED BEAST.



SUDDENLY HOVEN PRODUCED A KNIFE FROM THE SIDE OF HIS JACKBOOT.



CASEY FORCED THE POINT OF THE KNIFE TOWARDS HOVEN HIMSELF. THEN THEY ROLLED OVER AND HOVEN DIED BY HIS OWN KNIFE.

AT LAST  
IT'S OVER...



AS HE LOOKED AT THE DEAD GERMAN BELOW HIM, CASEY FELT A GRIM SATISFACTION. THE CHILDREN OF PONTIAVO HAD BEEN AVENGED.

BY NOW THE ITALIANS HAD BEEN OVERCOME.

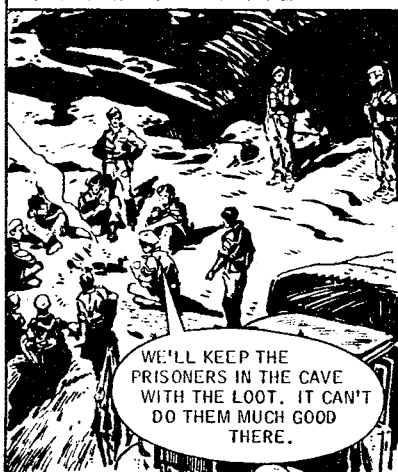
WE'VE GOT  
THE LOT.

AND I'VE GOT THE  
MAN I WANTED. WE'LL  
WAIT FOR OUR LADS  
TO APPEAR.



THERE WERE PLENTY OF SUPPLIES IN THE GERMAN LORRIES TO KEEP THEM ALIVE. AS THEY BREWED UP THAT NIGHT -

WE'LL KEEP THE  
PRISONERS IN THE CAVE  
WITH THE LOOT. IT CAN'T  
DO THEM MUCH GOOD  
THERE.



IT WAS ANOTHER WEEK BEFORE THE MAIN BRITISH FORCES REACHED THEM.



THE WHOLE STORY WENT TO G.H.Q. - AND TWO MONTHS LATER CASEY RECEIVED A BAR TO HIS MILITARY MEDAL. AND THERE WASN'T A MAN AT THE PARADE WHO DID NOT ADMIRE THE FINE QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP HE HAD RECENTLY SHOWN.





CAPTAIN HARLEY WAS THERE TO CONGRATULATE A PROUD CASEY AFTER THE PARADE.



I DUNNO IF YOU  
HEARD THAT, SIR -  
THEY WANT TO MAKE  
AN OFFICER OUT  
OF ME!

THAT MIGHT HAVE FRIGHTENED  
ME A FEW MONTHS AGO, CASEY. BUT  
WHEN I HEARD THAT YOU HAD CHARGE OF  
MILLIONS OF POUNDS WORTH OF VALUABLES  
FOR A WEEK, AND YOU HANDED THEM  
OVER INTACT - THEN I KNEW YOU  
MUST HAVE REFORMED!

CASEY GRINNED. ONLY THE DAY BEFORE  
HE HAD PRESENTED SOMETHING TO THE  
MAYOR OF PONTIAGO AS AID FOR HOME-  
LESS CHILDREN. IT HAD BEEN A VALUABLE  
GOLD PLATE - AN ITEM CASEY HAD  
"BORROWED" FROM HOVEN'S TREASURE!

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**" U-BOAT MENACE "**

**" THE RECKONING "**

**" INTRUDERS BEWARE "**

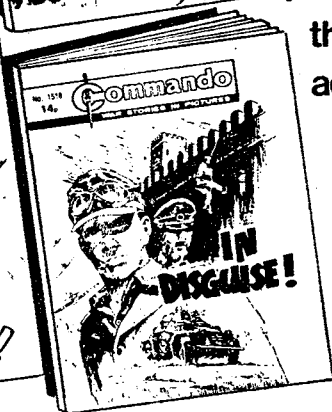
**" DIE LIKE A HERO "**

**Commando**  
**THE END**

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books are  
packed with  
thrills and  
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**Stars of Tennis — Bill Scanlon**

# CANNONBALL CASEY

**M**ET Private Casey, the biggest scrounger in the army. He'd pinch anything unless it was nailed down — and while he was at it he let the other blokes get on with the fighting. The exact opposite of a hero, that was Private Casey.

So how come a guy like that managed to win a medal for bravery?

